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Remarks

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These brief remarks are included to round out the picture of the Surgeon General's activity in reference to violence but especially spousal abuse. I appeared at this conference with Dr. Klein who was the person in charge of the sessions on spouse abuse at the Surgeon General's Workshop on Violence and Public Health three years previously. I referred to two of the many recommendations that came from that workshop: one recommendation urged the Surgeon General to do whatever he could to inform the American people of the epidemic of violence that infects over a million homes every year. And second, a more specific recommendation urged the medical profession -- and obstetricians and gynecologists in particular, to do whatever they could to stop the violence against women, pregnant women, and infants. This press conference was keeping faith with that promise.

I gave a few statistics and then reminded the audience that the subject at hand was an overwhelming moral, economic, and public health burden that our society can no longer bear. Help is available from law enforcement and the courts, from community and social service organizations, and from medicine, as the press would learn after I finished my remarks, from the obstetricians and gynecologists themselves. In introducing Dr. Klein I reminded the press that we are a civilized society and let's act like one, and let's stop the violence in our families, and let's end the battering of the women of this country